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ON THE COVER A female Marine participates in infantry training in 2013. Marine Corps

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 1.6 million members. These wartime veterans, working through more than 12,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

MARCH 2023

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Cruise Guide

Legion Family Day offers opportunity to 'Be the One'

"Family" is a word we use a lot in The American Legion. As far as our organization is concerned, it's up there with "veteran."

Military families are crucial to the support of veterans. They stand by their loved ones from recruitment to service to the transition back to civilian life. In return, The American Legion works tirelessly to support veterans and their families. That's why the National Executive Committee unanimously passed Resolution No. 7: American Legion Family Day at its meeting last October in Indianapolis.

The resolution calls for American Legion Family Day to be observed annually on the last Saturday in April. Posts are encouraged to open their doors to the community or host a public event. The goal is to educate others on what Legionnaires, Sons of The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary members, and American Legion Riders do for veterans, families, schools and their communities.

Let visitors to your Family Day event know what issues are important to the Legion. Consider focusing on our Be the One program and efforts to destigmatize the courageous decision to seek mental health support. Set up an information table so veterans know where to turn for help. Start by visiting **legion.org/betheone/resources** to download a Be the One trifold, customize it with a list of local resources and print it.

Veterans who take their lives usually feel isolated and alone. Some have no close relatives to whom they can reach out. It is a mistake for them to believe they have no family. Whether they know it or not, they have an American Legion Family. Like them, Legionnaires have worn the uniform, and many of us can relate to what they've experienced and endured.

Veterans rarely advertise their personal crises. Prevention requires listening. Even trained professionals sometimes miss the signs. If you know a veteran who may be struggling, encourage a call to the **988** national crisis line. Follow up, and be sure the veteran knows you are available as a friend and a listener. Let them know that you are family.

THE AMERICAN Legion MAGAZINE

Veterans Strengthening America

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The High Road

Regarding the article by Ken Olsen (January), it always astounds me that as a nation started by immigrants searching for justice we can act so unfairly toward our own citizens. Let's pray that more and more of us override racism in our communities.

Franz Azuolas, Brick, N.J.

Editor's note: *The last name of Harry Marioka, an interpreter with the Military Intelligence Service, was misspelled. It is Morioka.*

Photo by Ayse Gursoz

Mexico's Heroes, America's Brothers

I was pleased to see Cynthia Buchanan's article (January) and to learn that the Aguilas Aztecas are receiving more of the credit they so richly earned. My book "Republic P-47 Thunderbolt: The Final Chapter, Latin American Air Forces Service," and "Mexicans at War" by my friend and fellow Army veteran Santiago A. Flores, have detailed accounts of the 201 Escuadron that may be of further interest.

Dan Hagedorn, Fairfax, Va.

Valdez vs. Complacency

This was an excellent article (December) and a great example of all stakeholders coming together to be prepared and resilient for the next mishap. Bravo Zulu, Team Valdez!

The photo of workers steam-blasting rocks and washing down shoreline was good for public relations at the time but not a good tactic for spill cleanup, as it killed "oil-eating" bacteria that live under the rocks and in the sand. There must be a discussion of "How clean is clean?" Sometimes humans stomping into delicate shoreline grasses or other habitats in an attempt to get every visible sign of oil can often do more harm than good. It reminds me of the "political booming" of areas that didn't need it, simply to appease politicians, the public and the media.

Dwight Collins, Fernandina Beach, Fla.

"If I'm not showing it, I'm absolutely thrilled. I never expected any recognition."

Photo by Jerie Wilhelmsen

Retired Navy Lt. Royce Williams, who received the Navy Cross in a ceremony Jan. 20 at the San Diego Air and Space Museum. Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro presented the award.

On Nov. 18, 1952, Williams shot down four Russian MiGs in just over a half-hour off Korea. "I'd never worked so hard at flying an airplane," he told *The American Legion Magazine* in 2017.

In attendance was Navy veteran Steve Lewandowski, who is leading efforts to further upgrade Williams' award. "While this is a wonderful development, it does not preclude him from receiving the Medal of Honor," he said. Lewandowski and Williams are members of American Legion Post 416 in Encinitas, Calif.

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I would like to share my heartfelt appreciation for the article by Jeff Stoffer, and for "TFA to the rescue." As a former marine safety officer, I appreciate the coverage from a part of the Coast Guard set of missions that consistently gets overlooked by our own service. I spent nine years in search and rescue, and found I did more for maritime safety, security and rescue, and protecting the environment than any other mission in which I was involved.

I also learned in this issue that The American Legion helped the Coast Guard when our country abandoned us by saying, "You're not worth paying." You stepped in to ensure the most vulnerable members of the service were taken care of. Thank you.

Carolyn Beatty, Tampa, Fla.

Honored in Vietnam

Maj. Charles Kelly and the men like him saved an incalculable number of men in Vietnam (December). For me in particular, they saved someone who more than likely saved my life.

In 1967, my "big brother" was a combat Marine who was severely wounded near the DMZ and undoubtedly saved by the medevac chopper that picked him up. He doesn't speak often of what happened, but told me the last thing he remembered after he was wounded was being loaded into a Huey and hauled to safety.

Post-Vietnam, this man joined the Big Brothers organization. After my father died, I was lucky enough to have him step into my life and be a guiding force in it for 47 years. I can say definitively that this man not only shaped my life, but he saved it. For that, I owe some unknown Dustoff pilot, and his colleagues like Maj. Kelly and Maj. Gen. Brady, a debt of gratitude.

Bob Troutner, Hatboro, Pa.

***THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE* WELCOMES YOUR OPINIONS**

Include your hometown and a daytime phone number for verification. All letters published are subject to editing. Due to the volume of mail received, not every letter can be acknowledged.

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THE PLAYLIST

American Legion videos you don't want to miss.

Photo by Jeff Stoffer

'On to what's next' for SVA
Tango Alpha Lima podcast crew helps Student Veterans of America mark 15th anniversary.

Mental health march
Wisconsin Legionnaires trek 2.2 miles to spread awareness of the Be the One initiative.

NEF to the rescue
American Legion's National Emergency Fund helps Florida veterans, posts recover from Hurricane Ian.

Visit **legion.org/magazine/videos** or subscribe to the Legion's YouTube channel to see, show and share other American Legion videos. Also, check out the Legion's national Instagram reels for more videos.

Photo by Hilary Ott

54 Veterans who graduated from the mid-December American Legion College leadership program in Indianapolis

85 American Legion Baseball alumni enshrined in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y, once five-time All Star Fred McGriff and seven-time All Star Scott Rolen join the class of 2023 in July. A first baseman in the majors, McGriff played Legion Baseball for Tampa, Fla., Post 248. Rolen, a third baseman, played for Jasper, Ind., Post 147.

Photo by Lucas Carter

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Whereas ...

During the fall of 2020, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) implemented the Beneficiary Travel Self-Service System (BTSSS) to provide timely processing and payment of travel reimbursements ...

The price of gasoline has steadily increased, creating a financial hardship for veterans who must travel long distances for medical care and treatment ...

Though BTSSS allows the veteran to submit a travel reimbursement claim through any mobile device or computer and receive a payment within five business days, veterans are having issues with the online portal and are unable to receive adequate assistance from VA staff ...

The system uses Bing Maps, which may not be updated with the veteran's proper address, causing an error with submitting the form ...

Not all veterans have access to the internet ...

Payments take months to process ...

Veterans are unable to speak to a representative in real time when they receive an error with the system and may become stressed and overwhelmed with the process ...

Be it resolved ...

That The American Legion calls on VA to provide real-time assistance with the current travel claim process, whether that is the BTSSS portal or another portal system ...

That VA provide alternative methods for travel reimbursement that demonstrate inclusivity to all veterans, such as the previously provided Kiosk Check-In System.

Passed, American Legion National Executive Committee, Oct. 12-13, 2022

Photo by Nick George

'A bite at a time' for Be the One

THE EVENT

Thirty members of the Wisconsin American Legion Family hiked 2.2 miles during their January mid-winter conference to raise awareness about the Be the One initiative. Each participant carried a one-pound stone, representing a veteran who died by suicide.

THE PURPOSE

Jim Johnson, a member of Post 82 in Port Washington, came up with the idea for the hike. "We're trying to bring awareness to the Be the One campaign so other veterans know we are there for them. It's important for The American Legion to be there for all veterans so they have a resource (and) someone to talk to."

A PERSONAL JOURNEY

The oldest participant was 80-year-old Army veteran Ken Kasprzak, who has run 40 marathons. Fitness has helped him cope with stress and other challenges, including losing his wife to liver disease six years ago. "I didn't even want to live," says Kasprzak, commander of Post 355 in Grafton. "How did I get through it? Exercise. It's been a lot of what has kept me mentally healthy."

THE PROCESS

Be the One's goal is to reduce veteran suicide by raising awareness, lessening the stigma of seeking mental health treatment and empowering everyone to take appropriate action.

American Legion Past National Commander Denise Rohan quotes Bishop Desmond Tutu: "There is only one way to eat an elephant: a bite at a time." That's the best approach to reducing the rate of veteran suicide, she says. "One person at a time. It's each one of us taking the time to do that. That's what Be the One is all about. Just make a difference for that one person and you make a difference for their whole family and their community. It's not just one person. We're helping everybody."

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Learn how you can "Be the One" to help a veteran in crisis. ***legion.org/betheone***
- Download and use Be the One materials to promote the initiative. ***legion.org/betheone/resources***
- Share how you and/or your post are supporting Be the One. ***legiontown.org***

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*Methodology: Phone surveys at regular intervals with bronchiectasis patients using the InCourage system. Data collection began in 10/01/2013. As of 03/01/2022, the total cohort was 25,209 patients; 21,049 patients completed the baseline survey; 13,303 patients in 1-month cohort; 9,569 in 6-month cohort; 7,720 in 12-month cohort

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Comedian joins Tango Alpha Lima

Ashley Gutermuth is bringing her comedic wit, appreciation for the military and hot takes to the American Legion Tango Alpha Lima podcast as its new co-host.

Gutermuth, who is married to a pilot in the Air Force Reserve, is a member of the American Legion Auxiliary. She was chosen by Jerry Seinfeld as winner of the "Tonight Show" Seinfeld Challenge, and in 2021, she won the headliner category of the U.S. Comedy Contest.

Partnering with co-host Jeff Daly, Gutermuth is taking over for Ashley Gorbulja, who is working on a special podcast series for The American Legion and will return periodically to Tango Alpha Lima as a guest.

Introduce yourself to us. Who is Ashley Gutermuth?
I am a stand-up comedian, actor, military spouse and military advocate. I have six Roombas. I used to have seven, but the seventh one ran away to a dirtier house.

When did you first realize you had a knack for comedy?
I have always loved comedy and making people laugh. I grew up listening to comedy nearly constantly. I used to go to work with my parents and we would listen to British comedy on the long commutes.

How do you see the Tango Alpha Lima podcast evolving?
I imagine Jeff and I will eventually end up in some sort of bunker talking about which MRE tastes best and fist fighting over the tiny bottle of Tabasco.

What else should we know about you?
I run every day. My running streak turned eight years old in January. About three years ago, I started picking up litter while I run and have picked up over 1,000 pounds of trash. If I'm not performing or running, you will probably find me using my metal detector or deep in a garbage bin, trying to find treasure. Recently I found a shirt that said "World's Best Grandpa." Fits perfectly.

Listen to or view any of the more than 170 Tango Alpha Lima podcasts at **legion.org/tangoalphalima**.

– Henry Howard

"In the darkest days this district has ever seen, the support from the department and the support that posts around the nation have given us has just been incredible."

Jan Farrington, American Legion Auxiliary Department of Florida District 13 president, on monetary donations and relief items received in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian

3,643 Team Rubicon volunteers, called "Greyshirts," who deployed to 34 states and Puerto Rico in 2022. Greyshirts continue to support Hurricane Ian relief operations in Florida.

73 Average number of Team Rubicon volunteers who slept at American Legion Post 103 in Punta Gorda, Fla., each night in the month following Hurricane Ian's arrival

554 Team Rubicon volunteers who billeted at Post 103 throughout January

1,200 Team Rubicon and other volunteers who trained at Post 103 in support of hurricane recovery operations in Lee, Charlotte, Polk and DeSoto counties

104 Grants awarded in 2022 by the American Legion National Emergency Fund to 98 members and six posts, totaling **$261,761.75**.

Photo by Hilary Ott

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1. Henry Repeating Arms presenting a $50,000 donation to the American Legion. **2.** Henry Repeating Arms presenting a $100,000 check to The Journey Home Project, which Anthony Imperato then doubled for the chance to sing backup during "The Devil Went Down to Georgia." **3.** Anthony Imperato with American war hero and 1936 Olympics runner Louis Zamperini at his home. **4.** Henry Repeating Arms presenting a $50,000 check to the Disabled American Veterans organization. **5.** Henry Repeating Arms presenting rifles to USS Indianapolis survivor Edgar Harrell and ten other distinguished veterans. **6.** Anthony Imperato presenting rifles to veterans including Sgt. Omar Avila and three World War II veterans; Don Burwell, Weztel Sanders, and Al Hutchcraft. **7.** Anthony Imperato presenting a $50,000 donation to the Building Homes for Heroes organization. **8.** American D-Day hero, Ray Lambert, picking up his donated Henry Military Service Tribute Edition rifle. **9.** Anthony Imperato presenting rifles to Medal of Honor recipients Ty Carter and Don Jenkins, D-Day veteran George Krakosky, and 39-year veteran of the Air Force and Air National Guard, Linda Becker.

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HEALTH & FITNESS BY JENNIFER CAMPBELL

How meditation can reduce depression

The short, dark and cold days of winter can contribute to depression for many people, including veterans. Meditation is a science-backed solution to effectively combat these feelings, whether they're related to seasonal or other stresses. Those who practice meditation say they find it relieves stress, reduces PTSD symptoms, improves sleep, lowers blood pressure, helps soothe pain, aids in managing depression and anxiety, and more.

Common types of meditation include:

Mindfulness Urges awareness and being present in the moment while letting go of negative emotions and judgment. This form can increase focus and memory, reduce impulsive reactions and improve relationship satisfaction.

Guided Uses the voice of a live person or recording to encourage you to form relaxing mental pictures or situations, using the senses to evoke feelings of calmness. This is a great option for beginners.

Transcendental Emphasizes reciting a mantra (word, phrase or sound) and repeating it throughout the meditation. Studies show it may help reduce stress, depression and burnout.

3
Cups of coffee per day, versus none, associated with a lower risk of stroke, abnormal heart rate and hypertension. Coffee drinkers are also less likely to die from heart disease.
Source: Livestrong.com
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Progressive muscle relaxation Focuses on tensing and then relaxing muscles, often starting at the toes and working up the body. This form of meditation promotes calmness and relaxation, and may help with chronic pain.

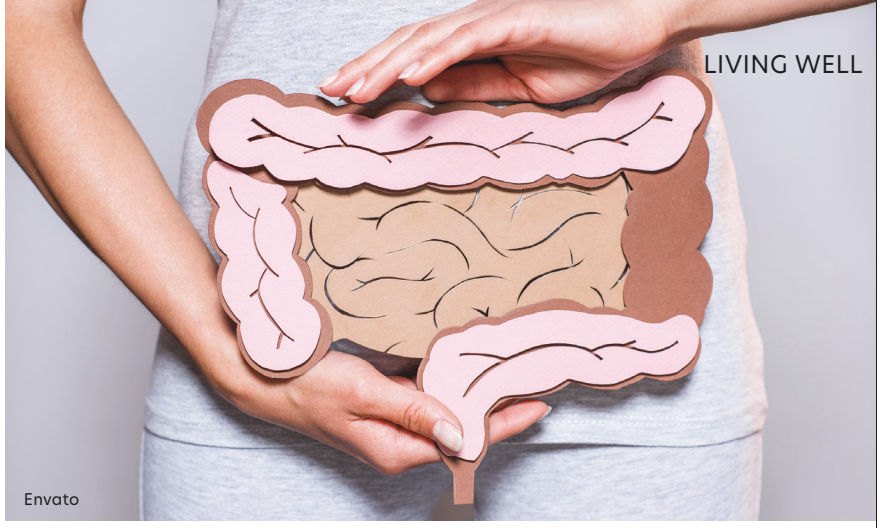
Breathwork Encourages mindful breathing, inhaling deeply and slowly by counting or using a cadence to reduce anxiety, improve concentration and increase emotional flexibility.

Metta or loving-kindness Promotes attitudes of love, kindness and compassion toward yourself and others, including enemies and sources of stress. The key is repetition of the message until one achieves an attitude of benevolence.

How to get started Starting a meditation discipline can be overwhelming. It's normal to have racing thoughts and difficulty focusing, or feel like it isn't working. The keys to meditation are consistency and compassion. The more you practice, the easier it becomes. Calm, Headspace and Insight Timer are downloadable guided-meditation apps that can help guide you through your meditation journey. For consistency, build it into your daily routine. Pair meditation with a daily habit like brushing your teeth, showering, or right before you go to sleep.

Also, ease your way into it. Start with short sessions and gradually increase the time and frequency of your practice. If you're having acute stress or a panic attack, breathwork and progressive muscle relaxation meditation can be powerful tools in overcoming them.

Army veteran Jennifer Campbell is a certified personal trainer with a master's degree in nutrition education. She is past commander of the California American Legion's 24th District and Hollywood Post 43.



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Silent symptoms

Colorectal cancer can take years to manifest, but signs exist.

BY MARTIN SAYERS

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer diagnosed in the United States. Yet many Americans don't realize they have colorectal cancer, as it can take years for symptoms to appear.

Colorectal cancer starts in the colon or rectum. Abnormal growths, called polyps, can form in walls – and some, over time, turn into cancerous cells. Brooks D. Cash, chief of the Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, says colorectal cancer typically does not present with symptoms, which is why screening at 45 in average-risk men and women is recommended. Signs do exist, however – although they could also indicate other conditions – and include changes in bowel habits, changes in stool consistency, blood in the stool and/or abdominal discomfort.

Treatment depends on the size, location and degree of the cancer's spread. Common treatments include surgery, chemotherapy and radiation therapy. The earlier the cancer is detected, the higher the chance of the treatment succeeding.

Cash recommends people 45 and older undergo regular colon cancer screening tests, and perhaps earlier if they are at increased risk due to family history. Screening options include a colonoscopy every 10 years, a yearly fecal occult blood test (one brand, EZ Detect, is available at Walmart and Walgreens for about $12), or a multitarget stool DNA test every three years.

Martin Sayers is a freelance writer living in Cambridge, England. He specializes in health and nutrition.

Regular screenings may decrease the risk of dying from colorectal cancer by **68%** or more. About one-third of Americans 50 to 75 – the age range where most colon cancers are diagnosed – have never been screened. Visit **cancer.va.gov** for information on screening resources for veterans.

Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.

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Model Prisoners

Legion post in Idaho State Correctional Institution showcased as an example for others nationwide.

BY JEFF STOFFER

American Legion Post 201 Commander Albert Ciccone has a saying that resonates with his fellow veterans inside the Idaho State Correctional Institution: "We serve our sentences, instead of just doing our time."

On a late November Saturday morning, about 40 members of the post and its Sons of The American Legion squadron gather in the prison's spotless visitation room for their regular monthly meeting. Every detail is by the book. The colors, advanced. Allegiance to the flag, pledged. Chaplain's prayer, done. POW/MIA chair, flagged and given its respects. Preamble to the American Legion Constitution, recited in unison. Business gets underway, with reports from officers, the initiation of one new member and remarks from department officials.

This meeting, though, is different. Patrolling the perimeter of the room is a video crew led by Mary Hayes, chief executive officer of Workbay, a national company that connects career seekers and employers, providing online resources for a range of job hunters, including those making the transition from incarceration to life outside. Among Workbay's clients are federal prisons and over a dozen state correctional facilities.

The company has come to the prison just south of Boise for interviews with veteran inmates, corrections officials and American Legion representatives who have spent more

Members of Post 201 gather for their regular monthly meeting, recorded to become a model at correctional institutions nationwide. Photo by Jeff Stoffer

than five years helping incarcerated veterans fulfill purposes inside that can ultimately help them return to the outside – and stay there.

Sons of The American Legion Squadron Commander Ryan Harrell reports on the post's performance for 2022. "So far this year, we have nearly surpassed 5,000 hours of service projects, including COVID-19 prevention, poppies, crochet efforts and what-not. As of today, we are now officially over 27,000 hours since the inception of this post in service committed. You have decided to serve and better yourselves and the community as a whole. Thank you."

Post and squadron operations also include restoration of bicycles for low-income children; management of a Legion-supplied shed filled with fresh clothes for newly released men; cleaning toys in the visiting area; sponsoring a Boys State participant; helping sponsor a Legion Baseball team; and crocheting blankets, mittens, socks, stuffed animals, hats and other items for State Veterans Home residents and mothers in domestic-abuse shelters, among others. Members raise the flag at reveille and lower it at retreat time each day, and are permitted to wear their Legion caps and pins on patriotic holidays. At the meeting, American Legion Department of Idaho Commander Matt Wrobel announces that a $2,500 grant has been approved for the prison post to receive two special incinerators for flag-retirement ceremonies, some 12,000 of which Idaho Legionnaires perform a year.

During the pandemic, Post 201 gained national attention for sewing thousands of protective face masks and gowns when they were in short supply nationwide. The Legionnaires also worked around the clock to disinfect the facility to prevent the spread of the virus. "It was all voluntary," says Jay Christensen, warden from 2018 to 2022. "The thing that was so great about putting them in charge of that is that I asked them to do it, and they covered everything else. They developed the schedule. They developed the routine. They studied all the sanitation equipment, how to properly use it, and trained each other … I didn't have to worry about it."

When Post 201's Legionnaires wanted to install a U.S. flag and pole in a prison courtyard, the warden said he could not allow anything with ropes. "Every time they had a problem, they had a solution ready for me," Christensen says. "They found (through Emblem Sales) a telescoping flagpole that we installed. It has no ropes."

Because of the veterans' willingness to solve problems inside, "each time we had a greater need, either in the community or in the facility … these were the guys I called on," says Christensen, who encouraged Hayes to look at the Legion post as a possible fit for her program.

Military veterans, the former warden explains, account for some 200,000 prisoners across the country. The American Legion has posts inside more than 30 facilities in at least 13 states.

Hayes thinks there should be more. "This is a story to be told," she says, noting that the Workbay video presentation will be promoted in prisons that want to charter American Legion posts, and a version will be prepared for employers – particularly those with veteran-hiring initiatives – who can see the service, skills and work ethics of Legionnaires soon to get out.

"You might have heard there are 11 million jobs right now and only 6.5 million people looking for jobs in America," Hayes says. "Corporate America is definitely trying to find their future talent pipeline. One of the untapped and overlooked sources of talent are those who are returning to their communities. One in three people here will return to their communities in the next year.

"We want to tell this story to corporations and communities to understand that people who have served their country, have taken that brave step, had a misstep, but are stepping back into their communities soon … how we can make that transition the best it can be."

"If you bring The American Legion into prisons, you're going to benefit the inmates, you're going to benefit the prison, and you're going to benefit the community," says Charles "Abe" Abrahamson, adjutant for The American Legion's Department of Idaho. "When these guys get out, they have such a head start on everybody else. That's what they're here to do."

"If they could get that second chance, it would

change their lives so much," says Area 7 Vice Commander Doug Huffman. "Even if they spend the rest of their lives in there, they've got a second chance to be a part of something that's valuable."

Abrahamson started the post in 2017, shortly after disabled Navy veteran Mark Person completed a 15-year sentence and was paroled. In 2014, Person was part of a 350-inmate transfer from the overcrowded Idaho prison to the Kit Carson Correctional Center in Burlington, Colo. There, he learned that a veterans group inside the facility could raise funds for good causes through cheeseburger sales and perform selected community-service projects. "All I could think of was cheeseburgers," Person says. "Shoot, I'm in."

He helped develop a veterans group that raised nearly $40,000 in three years for a family center that helps low-income children. "The most she had received in a year was $1,000. The next thing you know, we had purpose. We found something that we could do. Did we get some cheeseburgers out of it? Sure. But here we are – all of sudden, we've got a group of guys focused on doing something outside ourselves."

Before he processed out, Person urged other veterans in the Idaho prison to keep working as a group. Meanwhile, on the outside, he longed for that same purpose-driven camaraderie. "I get out and I think, 'What am I going to do with my life? How can I continue to serve?' Someone said, 'Hey, you ever think about joining the Legion?'"

Soon he learned that Abrahamson had started the new prison post – the first of two in the state system – and many veterans who had volunteered with Person while incarcerated were charter members. Person became an active member of Post 2 in Boise, rising to commander and district vice commander, and helping jump-start the Treasure Valley Legion Riders. He also became deeply connected to Post 201, attending meetings and launching the Day One program to assist newly released men.

"When I got released, there was no one there at the gate for me," Person says. "Luckily, I had some VA compensation I could live on. Most do not. We call it 'lint in your pockets.' They have nothing. They walk out with nothing. Now what?"

Person created a checklist of steps for those who are released, and began offering them rides on their first days out and to important appointments: parole and probation offices, health and welfare agencies, providers of clothing, food, employment services, housing and, importantly, mobile phones. "There is no avenue to get a cellphone, but you have to have it in this day and age," Person says. "People get released. If they are supposed to get a job within seven days, they've got to have a cellphone.

"It's the most exciting moment of their life, and it's the most overwhelming moment of their life," Person says. "So I go pick them up and spend a whole day driving them around, getting

Posts inside

American Legion prison posts can be found throughout the country. The Department of Indiana has 13, including Post 555 in Bunker Hill, which raises funds for The American Legion's Operation Comfort Warriors program. National Headquarters does not have a separate list of prison posts, but department adjutants recently reported the following posts chartered in correctional facilities:

- **Delaware** Post 9
- **Florida** Posts 398, 403, 405, 413
- **Idaho** Posts 201, 202
- **Indiana** Posts 130, 198, 208, 306, 390, 398, 480, 503, 505, 512, 555, 608, 830
- **Louisiana** Posts 432, 433
- **Maine** Post 218
- **Michigan** Post 766
- **Nevada** Post 519
- **New Hampshire** Post 123
- **Oregon** Post 131
- **Pennsylvania** Post 110
- **South Dakota** Post 323
- **Virginia** Post 775
- **Washington** Post 23

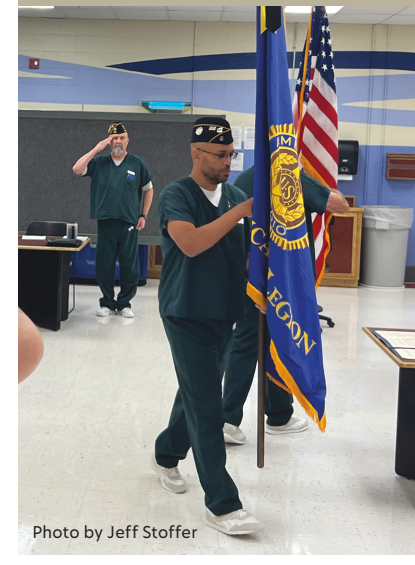

Photo by Jeff Stoffer

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them to all the things they need, connecting them to the resources. I do in one day what would normally take somebody walking in the cold, no coat, weeks to do."

Christensen says that kind of support is vital to prevent recidivism. "The No. 1 thing someone can have when they get out is one constant supporter in their life," he says. "The more constant supporters they can have, the better their chances are of not coming back to prison."

Recidivism declines sharply for parolees associated with veterans groups like The American Legion, says Abrahamson, who adds that Legionnaires maintain contact – somewhat like a Buddy Check – with newly released members who may need help. He has also assisted some inmates with discharge-characterization upgrades, which can be vital in applying for VA health care or GI Bill benefits.

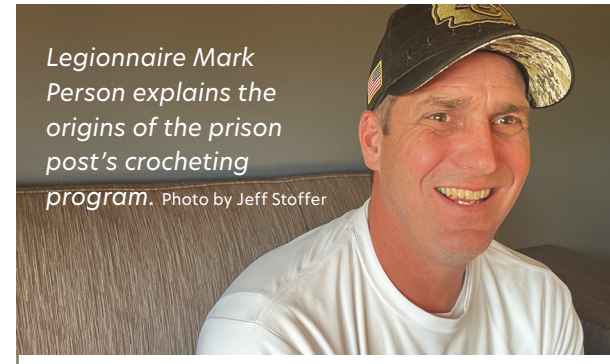
Ciccone says "it's humbling" that the post has been identified as a national model. "People come into the facility to visit family members, and they get to see The American Legion is represented here, and that there is value."

That value, says Hayes, can inspire more Legion prison posts and help veterans find jobs when released. The digital media project, she explains, "is about the American Legions in judicial settings across the country, and it's promoting that across the country because the outcome is that The American Legion is building, practicing, instilling, rewarding, envisioning all of the very best things about us being human and community, and every workplace is a community. There's an absolute alliance between what is practiced here and what employers are seeking in their workforce."

"It's not just what Idaho is doing," Christensen says. "It's what we can do everywhere, but we are going to give you the roadmap to get there."

"We're just a few guys here in Idaho trying to do what we can to positively impact society, still be productive members," Ciccone says. "For (others) to come in here and say, 'You're doing it right, and we want to take this to other vets' … what greater purpose is there?"

Jeff Stoffer is editor of The American Legion Magazine.



Legionnaire Mark Person explains the origins of the prison post's crocheting program. Photo by Jeff Stoffer

Crochet for convicts

While serving his sentence, Mark Person called his sister from prison and asked what she was doing. "Teaching your daughter how to crochet," she replied. He said he knew of a crocheting program inside the walls.

"What I didn't tell my sister was that it was definitely not a cool guy's sport. They offered it, but nobody was doing that."

Soon, he got a package with a big bag of yarn and a copy of "Crocheting for Dummies."

Person called his sister. "Hey, what in the world are you doing?" he asked.

"She got pretty stern and said, 'I don't care if it's cool or not cool, you're going to do this for your daughter. This is a connection you're going to make with her.' I couldn't argue."

Late at night – "my roommate sworn to secrecy" – Person would turn on his lamp, study the book and learn the craft. "The first thing I made was a pair of slippers for my daughter. And shoot, it was cold in here, so I made a pair for myself."

Then came a fire drill. "I forgot I even had them on. Next thing I know, I'm out of my cell, and I'm surrounded by all these tough guys … They all asked me, 'Hey, where'd you get those slippers?'

"Fast-forward about four months. We had one of the gang-unit sergeants come onto our tier and he says, 'I need to know what's going on on this tier …. Why is every guy sitting on their bunk right now crocheting?'"

Person's initiative has become a major component of American Legion Post 201's program. In addition to the State Veterans Home and a shelter for victims of domestic abuse, major gatherings of the American Legion Department of Idaho offer crocheted items from the prison for sale, and proceeds are used to sponsor programs like Boys State and American Legion Baseball.

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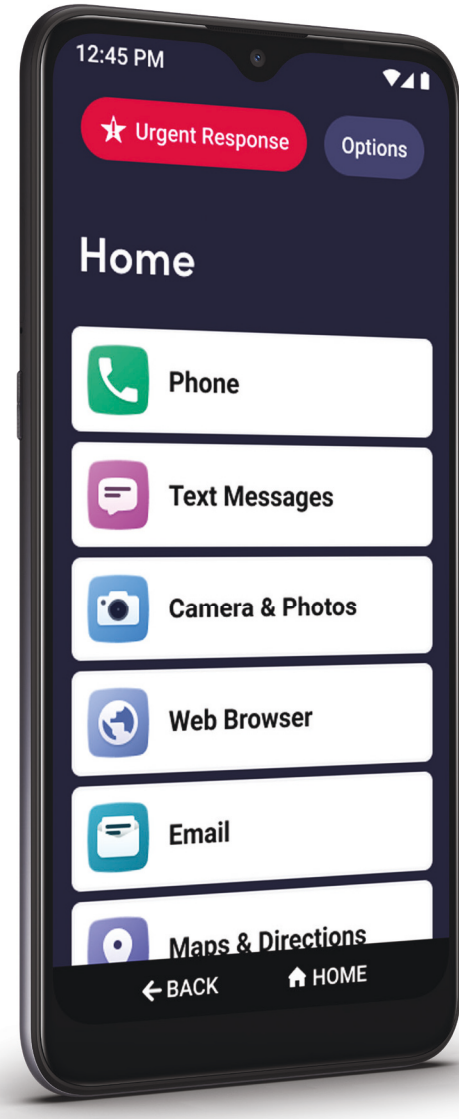

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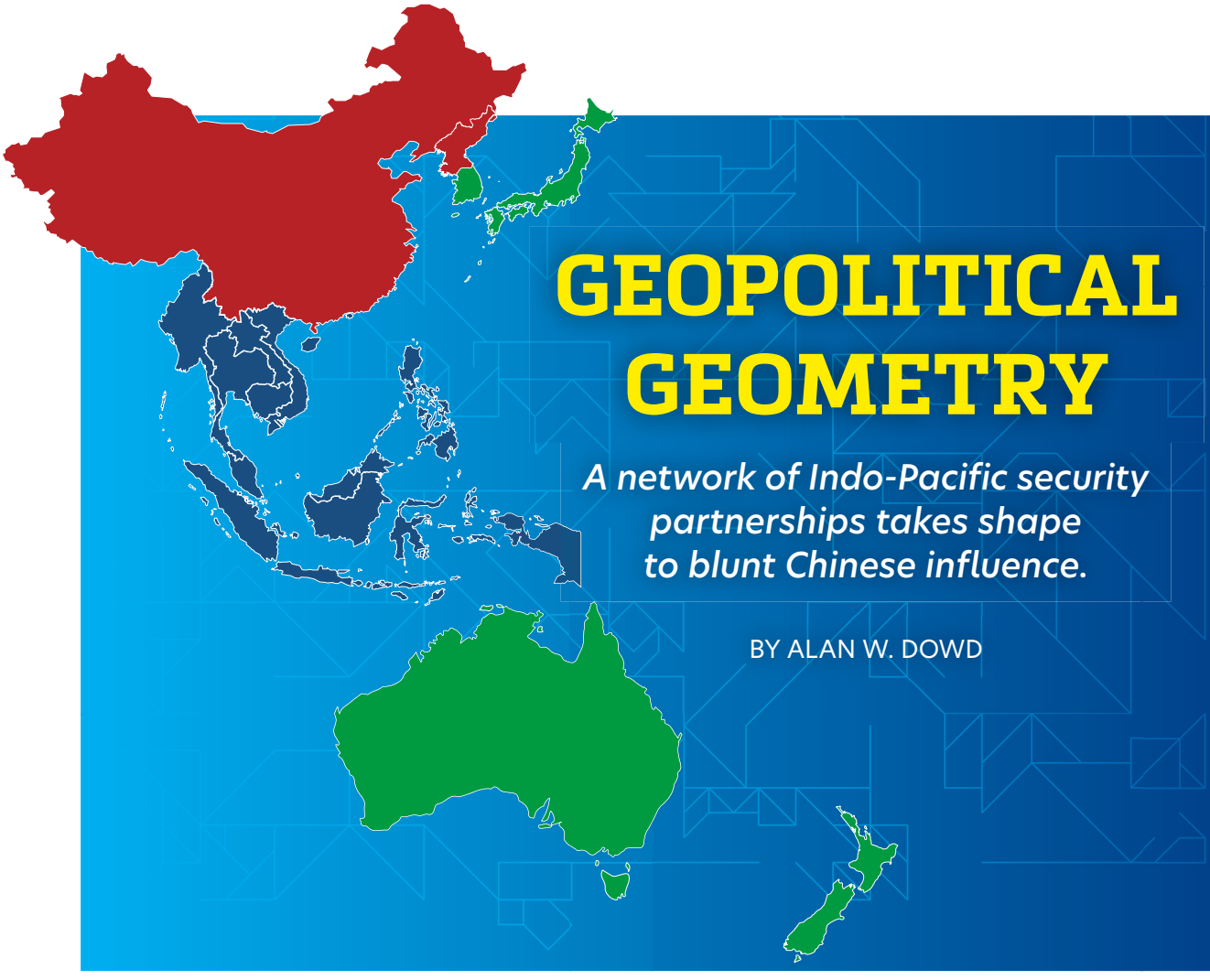

GEOPOLITICAL GEOMETRY

A network of Indo-Pacific security partnerships takes shape to blunt Chinese influence.

BY ALAN W. DOWD

Most Americans have heard about the "Quad," a loose security partnership enfolding the United States, India, Japan and Australia. But there's also a "security diamond," several security triangles and numerous other Indo-Pacific groupings focused on containing China – and keeping Cold War II from turning hot.

Triangles More than a decade ago, then-U.S. Pacific Command commander Adm. Robert Willard pointed to a trio of "burgeoning trilateral relationships" as essential to Indo-Pacific security: the U.S.-South Korea-Japan, U.S.-Japan-Australia and U.S.-Japan-India partnerships. These trilateral relationships, in turn, rest on a triangle of overlapping mutual defense treaties binding the United States separately to Japan, Australia and South Korea (the Republic of Korea, or ROK).

Today, various parts of these triangles are collaborating to promote regional security. New leadership in Seoul and Tokyo has opened the way for closer Japan-ROK cooperation. A U.S.-Japan-ROK flotilla conducted antisubmarine drills in late 2022. Australia and Japan have signed a reciprocal access agreement (RAA) enabling them to deploy forces to the other's territory. Japan and Australia have joined the United States for annual exercises in Indonesia. Australia and India are holding bilateral military maneuvers. India's fighter jets are training in Japan's skies. ROK military units are participating in Australia-led war games.

A fourth security triangle recently emerged. The Australia-U.K.-U.S. partnership (AUKUS) will deliver advances in hypersonic missiles, electronic-warfare systems, artificial intelligence and additional nuclear-powered submarines to protect Indo-Pacific waters.

Quads The late Shinzo Abe of Japan is considered the father of the Quad. Outlining in 2007 a "strategic global partnership" based on "fundamental values such as freedom, democracy

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and the respect for basic human rights as well as strategic interests," he envisioned Japan, India, Australia and the United States collaborating to lead "an immense network spanning the entirety of the Pacific Ocean." Also, it was Abe who sketched the outlines of a "security diamond" enfolding these nations "to safeguard the maritime commons stretching from the Indian Ocean region to the Western Pacific."

Thanks to Abe's vision, the United States, Australia, Japan and India are turning the Quad into a bulwark against China. The heads of government, defense ministers and foreign ministers of the group meet regularly to coordinate their Indo-Pacific policies. The Quad democracies are sharing satellite imagery, conducting large-scale naval maneuvers, deepening cooperation on supply-chain resilience, building secure 5G networks, partnering on cybersecurity and expanding intelligence sharing.

America's Quad partners are serious about deterrence. Spurred by Beijing's massive military buildup, Japan has increased defense spending annually for a decade running, and is upconverting its helicopter carriers into full-fledged aircraft carriers armed with F-35Bs, working closely with the United States on regional missile defense and purchasing 500 Tomahawk cruise missiles.

Australia is doubling its submarine fleet, hosting U.S. Marines, F-22s and B-52s, and integrating with its Quad and AUKUS partners. Australia recently signed a logistics-support agreement with India and has joined annual naval exercises involving the United States, Japan and India.

India has increased defense spending by 49% the past decade. Japan and India are conducting joint naval exercises and resource-development projects. U.S.-India military cooperation – involving space, cyberspace, and air, sea and land exercises – has rapidly expanded since the early 2000s. The United States and India are finalizing plans to utilize Indian ports to service U.S. warships. And in a signal to Beijing, U.S. Army units – airborne, special operations and National Guard – joined Indian troops in late 2022 for exercises just 62 miles from the India-People's Republic of China (PRC) border.

Yet another four-sided coalition is the Chip4 Alliance, a U.S.-Japan-ROK-Taiwan effort to ensure a steady supply of semiconductor microchips.

Quints There's talk of turning the Quad into the Quint by adding South Korea, but that hasn't yet turned into action. Even so, there are other five-sided security arrangements at work in the Indo-Pacific.

The Five Eyes – an intelligence-sharing alliance that includes the United States, Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada – has agreed to ban PRC telecom firms from their 5G networks.

For the first time ever, NATO in 2022 invited the leaders of Australia, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand to participate in an alliance summit. In another first, NATO identified the PRC as a challenge, vowed to defend freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific and committed to work with partners there "to tackle cross-regional challenges and shared security interests."

This NATO+Four grouping is already bearing fruit: Japan and South Korea are participating in NATO's Cyber Defense Center. Japan is partnering with Britain and Italy on a sixth-generation fighter-bomber. Canada and Germany have steamed warships to the region for exercises with Pacific partners. Britain dispatched the carrier HMS *Queen Elizabeth* to the Pacific on its first deployment. France has deployed the carrier *Charles de Gaulle* throughout the region, joined the United States in enforcing freedom of navigation in the South China Sea and sailed warships through the Taiwan Strait.

NATO's focus remains the North Atlantic area. Yet the United States and Canada quite literally bridge the trans-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific communities. France and the United States have

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territories sprinkled across the Indo-Pacific. Britain has sister nations in the Indo-Pacific that identify King Charles as their monarch. And every NATO member relies on the free flow of goods through the vital waterways of the Indo-Pacific, which explains why Italy's foreign minister says his country is moving "closer and closer to the Quad."

Heptagons and octagons The G-7 industrialized democracies – the United States, Britain, Canada, Japan, France, Italy and Germany – are collaborating to respond to China's "non-market policies and practices which undermine the fair and transparent operation of the global economy" and have called on Beijing to respect "a free and open Indo-Pacific … the rules-based international system … (and) peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait."

There's momentum in Congress to add Japan, South Korea and India to the Five Eyes, transforming it into an eight-sided coalition.

Decagon The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – a partnership of 10 countries – warns that Beijing's illegal island-building efforts "may undermine peace, security and stability in the South China Sea" and supports "freedom of navigation in, and over-flight above, the South China Sea." ASEAN includes U.S. treaty allies Thailand and the Philippines.

Supersized polygons The nascent 12-member Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) – enfolding the Quad and most of ASEAN – represents a total GDP of some $50 trillion. But containing the Beijing behemoth is going to require even more than that.

The United States has a shrinking defense budget (as a share of federal outlays), a billion fewer people than China, and a smaller Navy than China. Grasping these trends, former Joint Chiefs Chairman Adm. Michael Mullen envisioned "a 1,000-ship navy … made up of the best capabilities of all freedom-loving navies." In a sense, this navy of navies is already at work in the combined seapower of NATO, the Quad, ASEAN, IPEF and AUKUS – a supersized polygon representing dozens of nations and more than 1,000 warships.

As Gen. Kyle Ellison, vice chief at the Office of Naval Research, explains, "Part of our ability to deter is making it not about one versus one, but one versus two, or one versus three, or one versus four" – or one versus 10, 12, 36 or more.

Arithmetic Those numbers remind us that deterring the PRC will require America and its allies to master arithmetic as well as geometry.

Critics of the U.S. defense budget – $858 billion projected for fiscal 2023 – argue that it's a waste, that China spends a fraction of what America spends on defense, that our allies are free-riders.

If the 20th century taught Americans anything, it's that investing in defense is never a waste – and shortchanging defense never ends well:

- In the eight years before entering World War I, the United States devoted an average of 0.7% of GDP to defense. During the war, it spent an average of 16.1% on defense – and sacrificed 116,516 military personnel.
- In the decade before entering World War II, the United States spent an average of 1.1% of GDP on defense. During the war, it spent an average of 27% on defense – and sacrificed 405,399 military personnel.
- During Cold War I, by contrast, Americans invested an average of 7% of GDP on defense. Those investments didn't end all wars, but they did deter Moscow and prevent World War III.

As for comparisons to China, the reality is that China hides its defense spending in non-defense programs, invests little on personnel relative to the United States, steals much of the technology America spends billions developing, and focuses its mushrooming military budget on one geographic region.

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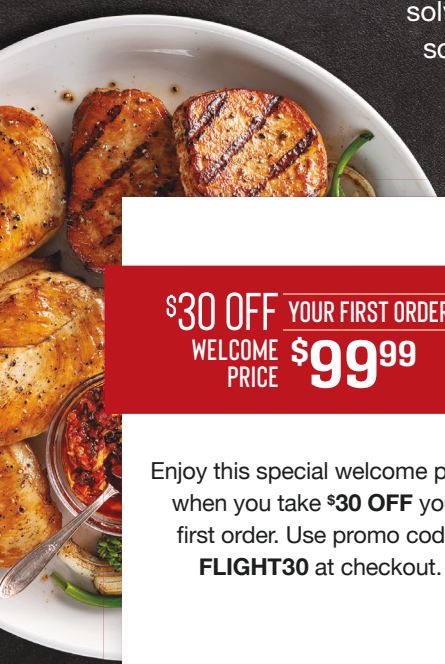

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At $858 billion, the defense budget represents a lot of money, but it's just 3.1% of GDP – far below the average during Cold War I. What matters when crafting defense budgets isn't raw-dollar amounts, but rather threats and percentages. With China building up and pushing out, the threats are increasing – and so must the percentage of GDP devoted to deterring those threats.

The consequences of shortchanging defense are already on display. The Army is undersized, overstretched and suddenly – though not surprisingly for some of us – focused on a new/old threat along NATO's eastern front. Just 12% of the Air Force bomber fleet has the stealth capabilities needed to penetrate PRC defenses. The Navy has 298 active ships; it needs more than 500.

Synergies That's the bad news. The good news is that America isn't alone, which brings us back to the contributions of allies and partners.

Just as the island democracy of Britain was America's bridgehead to the main theater of Cold War I, the island democracy of Japan is America's bridgehead to the main theater of Cold War II. Tokyo is almost doubling defense spending and is on track to become the world's third-highest defense-spending power. Japan vows to "closely cooperate" with the Pentagon in the event of a PRC attack on Taiwan, has stood up island-defense units, and is providing arms and training to Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

Australia is increasing defense spending 40% this decade, expanding its combat force by a third, and fielding new submarines, anti-ship missiles, anti-submarine systems, cyber defenses and F-35s.

South Korea is increasing defense spending by 7.1% annually, boosting its F-35 fleet, building an aircraft carrier and fortifying its missile defenses.

India just commissioned its second aircraft carrier, has boosted its defense budget 10% for the coming year and boasts the world's third-largest defense budget.

NATO nations are pouring huge amounts of fresh resources into defense. The fact that most of these resources will be devoted to deterring Russia should help the United States invest more into deterring China. Moreover, key power-projecting NATO members are committed to the Indo-Pacific. Britain is permanently stationing warships in the region. Japan and Britain have signed an RAA. France has 7,000 troops, 20 warships and dozens of warplanes based in the Indo-Pacific.

Add it all up, and the combined military assets and outlays of America and its NATO, Quad, AUKUS, IPEF and ASEAN partners can outpace China. In fact, the nations in these groupings spend $1.1 trillion more on defense than Beijing. But if they want to prevent Taiwan from going the way of Hong Kong and Crimea, if they want to keep the South China Sea open, if they want to avoid a replay of 1914, they must make sustained investments in deterrent military strength. They must collaborate in developing a division of labor. And they must leverage their advantages and capabilities into powerful synergies.

Pieces This new geopolitical geometry is necessary because Cold War II differs from Cold War I. Although this century's struggle between tyranny and freedom is following the broad contours of last century's, Cold War II is characterized by a different kind of enemy (a plugged-in PRC rather than a walled-off USSR), different perceptions of the enemy (the PRC plays the influence game better than the USSR), a different primary theater of operations (the vast, open waters of the Indo-Pacific rather than the cramped, crowded lands of Europe).

Ensuring that the 21st century isn't made in China – and keeping the Indo-Pacific, well, pacific – will depend not on an all-for-one fortress like NATO, but rather on a puzzle-piece network of interlocking triangles, quads and polygons.

Alan W. Dowd is a senior fellow with the Sagamore Institute Center for America's Purpose.

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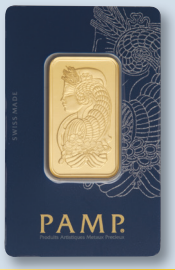

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Col. Milton J. Foreman in military uniform on horseback, 1915 American Legion Archives

The Trailblazer

BY JOHN RAUGHTER

World War I hero, American Legion founder walked many paths.

Palm Beach County, Fla., offers many amenities in its multitude of luxury condominiums. Ocean views, swimming pools, tennis courts – and if you're really lucky, a collection of papers from a past national commander and founder of The American Legion.

That's what Susan McCreery was gifted in 1991 when she purchased her Palm Springs home in the estate sale of the last known living relative of Past National Commander Milton J. Foreman.

"I'm thankful to have unknowingly acquired a collection relating to an incredible man, a lieutenant general, a World War I hero (and) one of the early founders of The American Legion," said McCreery, a public relations professional.

Foreman was born in Chicago on Jan. 26, 1863. His family lost all their possessions in the fire that swept the city eight years later. The tragedy forged a strong work ethic in Foreman, and at 13 he got a job as an errand boy for a wholesale house. He worked his way through college and earned a law degree while serving in the Illinois National Guard. Foreman was highly successful in both professions, later winning election as a Chicago alderman and rising through the military ranks from private to three-star general.

A Spanish-American War veteran, Foreman commanded a cavalry regiment during the Pancho Villa Expedition in 1916, and further distinguished himself in the Saint-Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives in Europe. His decorations included the Distinguished Service Cross and Distinguished Service Medal, along with France's grand cross of the Commander of the Legion of Honor and Belgium's Commander of the Order of the Crown.

After the war, Foreman chaired the first executive meeting of a veterans organization temporarily named "American Legion" on March 17, 1919, in Paris. It was the first of 34 National Executive Committee Meetings at which he would serve.

Foreman's dedication to the Legion led delegates to elect him a past national commander in 1921, the first to have not served an actual term. That same year, he delivered his famous Armistice Day address at the University of Illinois.

"While describing when he'd learned that World War I had ended while standing on the shores of the River Meuse, his first thought was, 'Thank God

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our young men are saved for us,'" McCreery said.

The speech's eloquence is surpassed only by its prophecy of another war, fulfilled not long after Foreman's death in 1935.

"I repeat that the great war emphatically did not end war; that our outstanding eminence as a business nation does not shield us from war, but rather invites it; that our consciousness that we should never indulge in military or naval aggression is no protection at all, but, if anything, the reverse," he declared. "We require protective force in reserve as surely as a rich house requires watchmen, or a great treasure requires bolts and bars."

Susan McCreery acquired a collection of Past National Commander Milton Foreman's papers when she purchased her home. Photo by Hilary Ott

Foreman was stationed in Luxembourg at the time of the 1919 Paris Caucus. His vision for The American Legion was praised by fellow founder George A. White, who said, "Predictions he made at his (home) in Luxembourg have all come true since then. He saw into the future of the organization as clearly as many men now observe into its past."

Regarded as a serious policy scholar, Foreman also possessed a sharp wit. The June 1932 *American Legion Monthly* recounts an early meeting of the National Executive Committee, during which a committeeman was "struggling and sputtering for words to frame a ... most sweeping resolution."

Foreman stepped in. "May I assist the gentleman?" he asked. "Resolved that vice hereby be abolished and that virtue shall prevail."

The career cavalry soldier noted the irony of his Chicago roots in the *Monthly*, as he recalled the orders he received to report to a riding academy. "It then occurred to me that I had never been on a horse. Well, they hoisted me aboard a yellow one. The saddle didn't fit, but after certain indignities I was graduated to the prairies surrounding Chicago. There, the troop had what were amiably called drills, concluded with resuscitating refreshments."

Discrimination was another factor overcome by the soldier. "Milton Foreman was one of an estimated 225,000 Jews in the American military during World War I," Michael Rugel of the National Museum of American Jewish Military History told Fox News in 2021. "He was one of just a few who eventually rose to the rank of admiral or general. Already an experienced veteran by the time of the war, he was highly decorated for his heroic actions in combat. His military record was equaled by few of any religion. His work with veterans in the years after the war showed his continued dedication to his men. His rise to lieutenant general in the Illinois National Guard makes him a trailblazer amongst Jews serving in the American military."

At the Legion's 18th National Convention in 1936, the organization distributed a memorial program extolling the legendary Legionnaire. "Milton J. Foreman needs no epitaph," it stated. "His monument is his life's work. He built not to the heart's desire, but to the soul's. The American Legion is a greater organization because he was part of it – and we are better men because we were privileged to be his associates."

McCreery says she is thankful to have some of Foreman's documents, and is adding to them through online purchases. Though the general has no remaining heirs, he does have an admirer intent on raising awareness about his accomplishments.

"I do feel a connection with him," she said. "It's kind of human nature when you gain insights into the sacrifices that another human being made, alive or dead – you gain a respect for them .... he always seemed to choose the harder path that yielded the greatest impact for his fellow man when it would have been easy to relinquish any responsibility or not undertake any new task that came before him."

John Raughter is deputy director of media relations for The American Legion.

Watch a video about Past National Commander Milton Foreman and his legacy:
legion.org/magazine/videos

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The Military Women's Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery Photo courtesy Military Women's Memorial

SHARED STORY

Military Women's Memorial president asks servicewomen, veterans to join registry.

BY MATT GRILLS

After celebrating its 25th anniversary last fall, the Military Women's Memorial (MWM) is continuing its nationwide push to collect and document the stories of women who served.

At the 103rd National Convention in Milwaukee, MWM President Phyllis Wilson thanked American Legion posts and Auxiliary units for decades of financial support for the memorial, which is embarking on a multimillion-dollar renovation focused on exhibit galleries.

A 37-year Army veteran and life member of USS *Jacob Jones* Post 2 in Washington, D.C., Wilson spoke to *The American Legion Magazine* about the MWM's registry of service, raising the memorial's visibility and the full integration of women in today's military.

What makes the Military Women's Memorial a must-see? The unusual thing about the memorial is it is more than a wall or open-air venue. We are all of that, but we also have a massive education center. People can come inside, stroll down the long gallery and see incredible stories of people who have defended the country from the Revolutionary War to today. One of the most stunning parts of the memorial is the rooftop terrace. As you turn and look toward Washington, D.C., there is nothing between us and the Lincoln Memorial, and the view is one of the most beautiful from a free and public location. It's one of those places nobody should miss when you're in the area.

Inside is the Hall of Honor, where we honor the women who have given their lives in defense of this nation. Within are three slabs of marble, probably 16 feet tall, 6 feet wide, standing side by side. This marble was quarried the same day as the marble used to create the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The tomb guards are forbidden from touching the Tomb, but they know they can come here and lay their hands on these sister stones. It's a special place.

How are you raising the memorial's profile? The curved front wall to the memorial was built as the ceremonial entrance to Arlington in the 1930s, and because of its historic nature we are precluded from putting any kind of name onto the grounds of the memorial itself. So as people drive in, there's nothing that tells them what the wall is, let alone that there's a museum dedicated to the 3 million women who served. This has been one of our biggest challenges: trying to ensure that not just women, not just girls, but all

of America comes to see these incredible stories of courage and service and patriotism. We're making sure these stories are available on our website, where you can do a 360-degree virtual tour. We also have a YouTube channel, which has a lot of the videos located inside the memorial.

Tell us about MWM's registry. We have about 305,000 stories, which is fantastic, but it's about 10% of all there should be. Certainly there are books about particular women who served, but for many of us nobody's going to write a book, even a chapter. That doesn't make our story inconsequential. It's important that our shared story, put into one national database, show the progress from when women were primarily either secretaries or nurses in the military to today, where every career field, branch of service and rank is available to us. Whether you served a couple of years or a couple of decades, it doesn't matter. We can only tell the stories we know about, so we encourage every woman to add her story to the registry. It's super easy and all done online. Go to **womensmemorial.org**, create an account, and it walks you through it.

Once you've uploaded your story, it creates what looks to me like a baseball card: your photo, years of service, where you served – and most importantly to me, anyway – memorable experiences. What do you recall? Were you first in your field in any area? Were you first in your family to join?

Phyllis Wilson
Photo by Jeric Wilhelmsen

Whether you're talking women Marines of the '40s and '50s to those who recently completed a first training on the West Coast, we need these women to put their stories into our database. That's how we live on and show what the trailblazers of 100 or 50 years ago did when it was much harder than it is today. We can see the growth in what we are afforded as a result of what they did. But the stories have to be in there to show the proof.

It's incredible to have witnessed. It was hard for somebody like me to even get an opportunity to go to jump school, and now not only is the sky the limit, outer space is the limit. Every career field is open, and it's been through the support of men and women at the highest levels of the U.S. government who saw the need, who saw the value, of affording all of us this opportunity. And I don't think we've let anybody down.

Read the full Q&A online: ***legion.org/magazine***

Download, listen to or watch the Tango Alpha Lima podcast episode featuring Phyllis Wilson: ***legion.org/tangoalphalima***

LORE OF THE LEGION

STORY: JEFF STOFFER
ART: JEREMY ALFARO
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FLORENTINE EXPLORER AMERIGO VESPUCCI SAILS TO THE "NEW WORLD" BETWEEN 1497 AND 1504...

HE COLLECTS INFORMATION ABOUT A MYSTERIOUS LAND ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE OCEAN.

MAPMAKER MARTIN WALDSEEMÜLLER USES VESPUCCI'S FINDINGS TO DEPICT THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

THE MAP, FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1507 IN THE FRENCH TOWN OF ST. DIE-DES-VOSGES, NAMES THE LAND "AMERICA" IN HONOR OF VESPUCCI.

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STILL ATTACHED TO THE WALL OF A BUILDING IN THE VILLAGE, AMAZINGLY, IS THE PLAQUE.

LESS INTACT ARE THE PEOPLE -- PREDOMINANTLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN -- WHO HAVE LOST EVERYTHING.

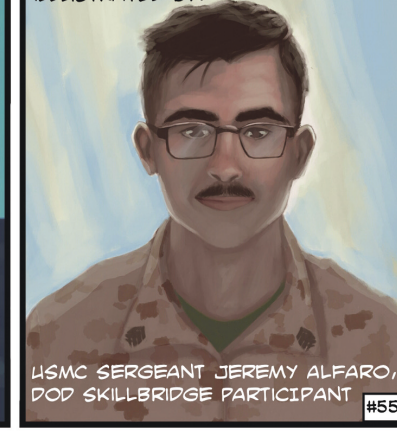
SOLDIERS QUICKLY REPORT BACK TO THE UNITED STATES, AND AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY POSTS AND UNITS COLLECT HUNDREDS OF PACKAGES OF FOOD, CLOTHING AND SUPPLIES.

THEY URGENTLY SHIP RELIEF SUPPLIES TO THE PEOPLE IN THE TOWN WHERE AMERICA GOT ITS NAME.

THE PLAQUE IS NOW PROTECTED IN A MUSEUM IN THE TOWN AND CAN BE SEEN BY REQUEST.

NOTE: AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY MEMBER GINETTE CROSLEY AND AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE PAST NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER DOUG HAGGAN CONTRIBUTED TO THIS *LORE OF THE LEGION*.

THIS *LORE OF THE LEGION* ILLUSTRATED BY:



USMC SERGEANT JEREMY ALFARO, DOD SKILLBRIDGE PARTICIPANT

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FAQ: The Camp Lejeune Justice Act

The American Legion and Bergmann & Moore, LLC, have entered a memorandum of understanding to help veterans understand the Camp Lejeune Justice Act (CLJA) and how to seek relief from illnesses caused by water contamination at the Marine Corps base. Following are some frequently asked questions about the measure, which can assist veterans and families who served at the installation between Aug. 1, 1953, and Dec. 31, 1987.

What is The American Legion doing to help its members navigate the CLJA? The Legion's litigation and training partner, Bergmann & Moore, LLC, has negotiated an agreement with a national mass tort firm that provides for lower legal fees and no hidden litigation costs for Legion members. Bergmann & Moore is not referring these cases to other law firms but will serve as co-counsel for every Legion member who signs up online and completes the form at **camplejeunelitigationteam.com/al** or calls **(800) 898-9450**.

How many CLJA claims have been filed? As of January 2023, more than 15,000 had been filed since August 2022.

What are the most common conditions attributed to toxic exposures at Camp Lejeune? The most widely reported injuries/sicknesses include Parkinson's disease, lung cancer, kidney cancer, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, bladder cancer, prostate cancer, leukemia, breast cancer, liver cancer, multiple myeloma, colorectal cancer, miscarriage/infertility, brain cancer, birth defects, soft-tissue cancer, thyroid cancer and cervical cancer. Further illnesses will be added, and anyone who suffers from any disability believed to be due to toxic exposure at Camp Lejeune can file a claim.

Where can I find up-to-date information about CLJA developments? Veterans, family members and others potentially affected by contaminated water at Camp Lejeune are encouraged to consult American Legion-accredited service officers about the lawsuit. Visit **legion.org/serviceofficers** to find one nearby.

Will VA disability benefits already received reduce the award received under the Camp Lejeune Act? The language of the CLJA indicates there will be some sort of offset, but it's currently unclear how that offset would work. Our hope is that only a very narrow class of VA benefits (those explicitly granted by VA as due to toxic exposure at Camp Lejeune) will be used to reduce CLJA awards.

Will an award made under the CLJA reduce monthly VA benefit payments? VA is on the record stating that ongoing VA disability benefit payments will not be reduced by awards received under the CLJA.

May I file a VA disability claim at the same time I file a CLJA claim? Yes, and this is recommended. To file a VA disability claim. you should contact your American Legion service officer. To file a CLJA claim, you should contact Bergmann & Moore.

I have a family member who died at Camp Lejeune. Can I file on their behalf? Yes, survivors and loved ones may bring suit.

What are attorney fees and costs related to a CLJA claim? We believe veterans shouldn't be charged unreasonable legal fees, especially ones with added costs that can easily amount to over 50% of an award. Bergmann & Moore's legal fee is 33.33%. This is a hard cap.

What is the first step in filing a CLJA claim? Go to the Legion-dedicated website – **camplejeunelitigationteam.com/al** – and fill out the form. Those who wish to speak to someone personally can call **(800) 898-9450**.

What happens next? Initial contacts will be with employees of Beasley Allen, the national litigation firm Bergmann & Moore has partnered with for Camp Lejeune cases.

Who can I contact if I still have questions about filing a CLJA claim? Elizabeth Hartman is Bergmann & Moore's CLJA liaison with American Legion members regarding Camp Lejeune issues: **lhartman@vetlawyers.com** or **(252) 497-7255**.

For more, visit ***vetlawyers.com***.

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ON POINT

THE AMERICAN LEGION IN WASHINGTON

COMMANDER'S TESTIMONY

The American Legion's Washington Conference was Feb. 26–March 1, culminating with National Commander James V. "Jim" Troiola's testimony before a joint session of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs.

Following meetings of national committees and commissions, Troiola shared with lawmakers the Legion's top legislative priorities for the 118th Congress. Those priorities are posted online at **legion.org/legislative**, and action alerts at **votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home**.

Troiola's testimony was scheduled to be livestreamed from the Dirksen Senate Office Building on March 1 at 10 a.m., and will be available online, with full conference coverage, at **legion.org**.

Photo by T.J. Kirkpatrick

MY GI BILL VETERANS & EDUCATION BY VALERIE HEFFNER

The Veteran Readiness and Employment program

Q: *When I served in the Army, I contributed to the Veterans' Educational Assistance Program (VEAP), in which servicemembers on active duty set aside money that the government would match. I didn't attend college at that time and withdrew what I contributed.*

Recently I was awarded a 100% total and permanent VA disability rating. Given that I withdrew my VEAP earnings 35 years ago, will my spouse and I be able to enroll in a school under my newly established rating?

A: Even when a servicemember takes money out of a VEAP program, that person may apply for the Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) program. Once the application is submitted, a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) will determine if the applicant is entitled to receive VR&E benefits and services for post-secondary education and training at a college, vocational, technical or business school. If so, the counselor will assist with enrollment and mail or email approval to the institution.

Your spouse may be entitled to Chapter 35, Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance and may apply at **va.gov/education**. To apply for VR&E, go to **va.gov/careers-employment**.

Valerie Heffner is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Apache Junction, Ariz.
askvalerie@legion.org

TALMA contest open for submissions

The annual American Legion Media Alliance (TALMA) contest is now open for submissions in seven categories: websites, publications, visual media, social media campaigns, editorial/news writing, editorial/informational writing and public relations/community outreach. This is an opportunity for TALMA members to be recognized for the work they have done to promote The American Legion at the post, district and department levels and within their communities.

All entries must have been published during the 2022 calendar year. The deadline for submissions is April 15. Visit **legion.org/talma/contest** to review the rules and submit entries electronically.

The contest is open and free to all members of TALMA. Not a member or need to renew? Visit **legion.org/talma/join**.

TALMA is open to anyone who is a current member of the American Legion Family. It is intended for those producing media at the post, district or department level, including but not limited to public relations, website, social media and newsletters. Membership benefits include the annual awards contest, training by subject-matter experts, resources for promoting Legion programs and more. The membership fee is $15 annually.

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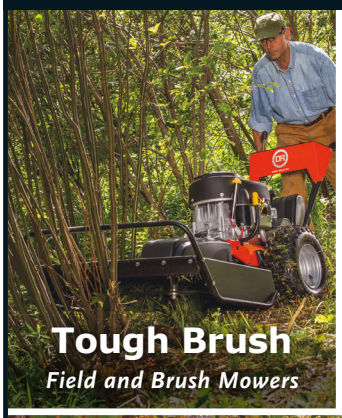

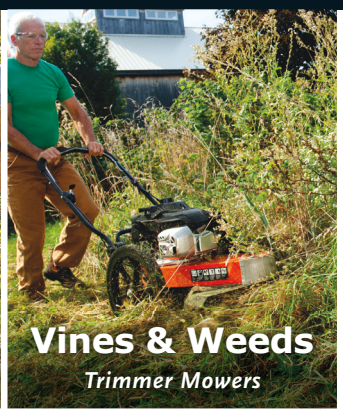

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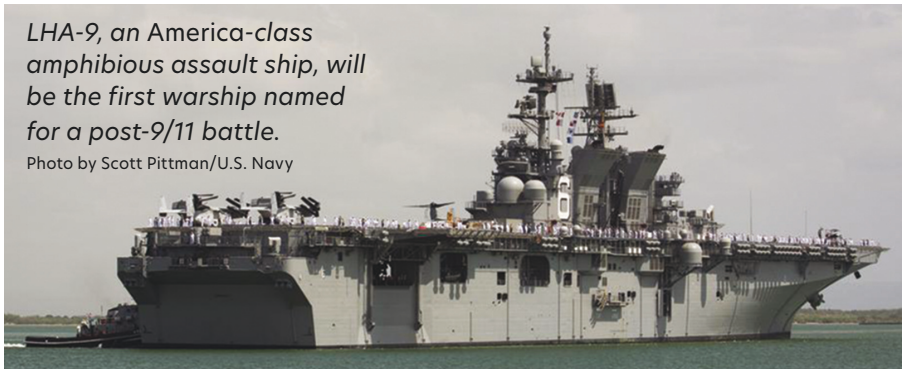

LHA-9, an America-class amphibious assault ship, will be the first warship named for a post-9/11 battle.
Photo by Scott Pittman/U.S. Navy

Warship to honor sacrifices at Fallujah

One of the next *America*-class amphibious assault ships will be named USS *Fallujah*, Military.com reports. Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro made the announcement about the new warship, which will honor the heroism and sacrifice of U.S. Marines and other servicemembers during a pair of battles in the Iraqi city of Fallujah.

Fought in the spring and winter of 2004, the battles of Fallujah are considered the bloodiest engagements of the Iraq War, with more than 100 coalition forces killed and over 600 wounded, the website notes.

Fallujah "is, and will remain, imprinted in the minds of all Marines and serves as a reminder to our nation, and its foes, why our Marines call themselves the world's finest," said Gen. David Berger, commandant of the Marine Corps.

Helping hand

Abandoned and captured Russian weapons "have turned Moscow into, by far, the largest supplier of heavy weapons for Ukraine, well ahead of the U.S. or other allies in sheer numbers," according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

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New Libido-Powering Pill Helps Men Enjoy Long-Lasting Intimacy - At Any Age

Men across America are raving about a newly enhanced potency supplement that helps achieve healthy blood flow on demand

After age 40, it's common knowledge that performance begins to decline in many men. However, a new, performance empowering pill is showing that any relatively healthy man can now enjoy long-lasting, and frequent intimacy – at any age.

This doctor-designed formula, created by leading anti-aging expert Dr. Al Sears, has already helped men overcome low and sinking libido -- and has recently undergone a potency-enhancing update – with remarkable new results.

When the first pill -- **Primal Max Black** -- was first released, it quickly became a top-selling men's performance helper, promoting intimacy across America.

It worked by supporting healthy testosterone levels. However, Dr. Sears soon realized that this isn't the only challenge men face with performance. That's when he turned his attention to blood flow.

And this became **Primal Max Red**.

PROBLEM IS,RESULTS ARE MORE MECHANICAL THAN HORMONAL

Truth is, once blood flow slows down for men, no matter how exciting it is, it won't be enough without the necessary amount…

So enjoying intimacy without healthy blood flow becomes difficult for most men.

Luckily, a Nobel prize-winning scientist discovered the simple answer to help support performance strength and confidence -- by boosting vital blood flow -- and enhancing this essential performance function.

Using this landmark Nobel Prize as its basis, **Primal Max Red** enhanced healthy blood flow for untold millions of men around the world with the use of strong nitric oxide boosters.

While **Primal Max Black** helped maintain optimal testosterone, **Primal Max Red** tackles a lesser-known challenge.

Director, Al Sears MD, who has authored over 500 scientific papers and has appeared on more than 50 media outlets including ABC News, CNN, ESPN, Discovery, National Geographic, Lifetime, and many more say, *"Less than optimal blood flow can be part of a huge problem that affects a lot of men. And it needed to be addressed once and for all, so men would not dwell on it. Then, once we optimized it and had a great deal of success, we set out to see if we could do even better."*

The former formula had excellent results. However, new research showed that for even faster, anytime, anywhere results, increasing the dose of a key compound was needed.

So, one of the three nitric oxide boosters in the new **Primal Max Red**, L-Citrulline, was clinically boosted to 9000 mg, and the results were astounding. Which is no surprise considering that 5000 mg is considered a "normal amount" -- giving the new version nearly doubled the blood flow boosting power.

Men who had previously been unsure about their power and stamina were overjoyed to be back to their old selves and to get and maintain a healthy bloodflow when they needed it.

A new discovery that increases nitric oxide availability was recently proven to boost blood flow 275% - resulting in improved performance.

BETTER BLOOD FLOW, STRONGER RESULTS

The best way to promote healthy blood flow throughout the body is with the use of **Primal Max Red**. By using it, when exciting signals leave the brain, blood flows much faster like it used to.

This critical action is how men across the country are enjoying full and satisfying performance at any age. No need to bother with testosterone-boosting shots, blue pills, or shady capsules that have no effect.

Primal Max Red can effectively promote healthy blood flow that most men can use for maximum intimacy. This is leading to more greater capacity and satisfaction, coupled with long-lasting performance.

"There was a time when men had little control when it came to boosting their blood flow," Dr. Sears said. "But science has come a long way in recent years. And now, with the creation of nitric oxide-boosting **Primal Max Red**, men can perform better than ever, and enjoy intimacy at any age."

Now for men across America, it's much easier to stay at their performance peak as they get older.

HOW TO GET PRIMAL MAX RED (AND FREE PRIMAL MAX BLACK):

To secure free bottles of **Primal Max Black** and get the hot, new **Primal Max Red** formula, buyers should contact the Sears Health Hotline at **1-800-276-7156** TODAY. "It's not available in retail stores yet," says Dr. Sears. "The Hotline allows us to ship directly to the customer." Dr. Sears feels so strongly about **Primal Max**, all orders are backed by a 100% money-back guarantee. "Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days from purchase date, and I'll send you all your money back."

Call NOW at **1-800-276-7156** to secure your supply of **Primal Max Red** and free bottles of **Primal Max Black**. Use Promo Code **AMLPMX223** when you call. Lines are frequently busy, but all calls will be answered!

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FOCUS ON FINANCES BY J.J. MONTANARO

Five tips for retirement planning in 2023

I recently attended a national financial-planning conference. With the 2022 bear market, not-so-transitory inflation and a lot of uncertainty as a backdrop, you can imagine the buzz. Quite a few sessions focused on navigating retirement, retirement income and retirement risks in general. Here are five takeaways:

Start reasonable. When I entered the financial planning industry nearly 30 years ago, research was conducted that resulted in what is known as the "4% rule." That benchmark is still discussed as a starting point for sustainable inflation-adjusted retirement-portfolio withdrawals. In other words, the money in your balanced portfolio should last 30 years if you begin withdrawals at no more than 4% (and adjust them each year for inflation). In recent years, low bond yields and high stock valuations have led many to theorize a lower start point was needed, but clearly …

Timing matters. The combination of a declining portfolio – like we saw last year – and withdrawals can gravely impact a retirement income plan. That's especially true at the beginning of retirement. Let's say you had $100,000 on Jan. 1, 2022, and withdrew $4,000 from your portfolio on the first day of the year, which dropped your portfolio to $96,000. A tough year in the markets saw your $96,000 shrink 15%, to $81,600. Again, following the rule, you boost your withdrawal for 2023 to $4,280 to accommodate inflation. If the same thing happens again this year you would finish with just under $66,000, and the chance of your portfolio lasting another 28 years would be severely affected. In industry lingo, this is called sequential risk, and things like a market downturn can affect how impactful they are. The point is …

Keep your hands on the wheel. Rules of thumb help provide a high-level assessment of where you stand, but you and your advisers can't put your retirement income plan on autopilot. It must be monitored and adjusted as necessary. Speaking of you and your team …

One size doesn't fit all. I'm talking about your approach to creating retirement income. I've always been a fan of a time-segmented approach. Take the money needed in the next three years and place it in cash equivalents, a more balanced approach of stocks and bonds for years 4 through 7, and a more stock-heavy approach for money targeted for use in year 8 and beyond. However, some folks may be more comfortable with a heavier reliance on guaranteed income or using a total-return approach. In any case …

You may need more equities than you think. Another theme at the conference was the need to anticipate and plan for longer life expectancies. That could mean retiring later, incorporating guaranteed income annuities or longevity insurance into your plan, or at a basic level, maintaining a larger percentage of stocks in your portfolio for longer. If retirement lasts for 40 or 50 years, you may have to change things up.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. ***legion.org/usaa***

Convention contest applications open

American Legion bands and color guards can now apply to compete during the 104th National Convention in Charlotte, N.C.

The National Color Guard Contest will open the convention on Aug. 25. The contest will start at 4 p.m. in Exhibit Hall A, Exhibit Level of the Charlotte Convention Center, with Newport Harbor Post 291 of Newport Beach, Calif., defending its title as champion. Applications are due to National Headquarters by July 21.

On Aug. 26, the American Legion National Concert Band Contest will kick off at 1 p.m., also in Exhibit Hall A. The event includes Concert Band and Exhibition Band classes. Applications are due April 28.

Photo by Hilary Ott

For contest applications and rules, go to **legion.org/convention/contests**.

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Reduces the risk of infections?	YES More than 5 million Men's Liberty units have been sold, with reduced risk of infections or skin injuries	NO High incidence of diaper rash, sores,yeast infections and dermatitis
Invisible under clothing?	YES Men's Liberty is unnoticeable — only you know it's there	NO Awkward diapers can be ill-fitting, bulky and uncomfortable
Little to no out-of-pocket cost?	YES Covered by Medicare, most Medicaid plans, many private insurance plans, workers compensation and VA/Tricare	NO Adult diapers are not covered by Medicare, costing users up to $300 a month

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[1]Vaughan CP, Johnson TM 2nd, Goode PS, Redden DT, Burgio KL, Markland AD. Military exposure and urinary incontinence among American men. J Urol. 2014 Jan; 191(1):125-9. doi: 10.1016/j.juro.2013.07.016. Epub 2013 Jul 16. PMID: 23871759.

LT 70067 A

How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** e-mail **reunions@legion.org** or submit information online at **legion.org/reunions**.

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are free.

Notices will remain online until the final day of the reunion. Upon submission, allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing twice a year.**

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, phone number and e-mail address. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206** or e-mail **reunions@legion.org**.

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are free.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.**

Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to ***The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**.

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your American Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to ***The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**. Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE / ARMY AIR FORCES

C-123s in Southeast Asia, Branson, MO, 5/8-12, Sue Rice, (417) 872-9750, srice1591@gmail.com; **Ramey AFB Historical Assn,** Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, 3/28-4/1, Elton Lanier, (309) 251-1740, jlanier466@gmail.com; **RED HORSE and Prime BEEF Assn,** Fort Walton Beach, FL, 10/23-27, Dick Aldinger, (407) 399-8937, famdinger@aol.com

ARMY

34th Eng Bn (Vietnam), Northeast Harbor, ME, 6/14-18, Pat Boldman, (219) 863-0049, pboldman711@gmail.com; **35th/538th Land Clearing Co,** New Hampton, IA, 8/24-26, Doug Ball, (563) 569-8452; **65th Inf Div Assn,** Washington, 9/27-10/1, Jackie Hanson, (605) 229-2812, 65thdiv@gmail.com; **70th Cbt Eng Bn,** Branson, MO, 4/17-21, Roger Rock, (775) 623-1029, 70engrs@gmail.com; **317th & 320th Rgts 1st Bde 80th Div,** Waldorf, MD, 9/30, Jae-Te Starks, (301) 537-5044, combinedreunioncommittee@gmail.com; **458th Trans Co (River Patrol Boat),** Everett, WA, 9/12-16, Mike Hebert, (757) 636-7771, michaelhebert@cox.net; **A Co 7th Eng Bn 5th Inf Division (Mech),** San Antonio, 9/7-10, Thomas Grafton, (314) 416-0535, graftonthomas5@gmail.com; **ASA Vietnam/Southeast Asia (All ASA Units),** Oshkosh, WI, 6/14-18, Joe Shubat, (920) 566-0456, o5h200@centurylink.net; **OCS Alumni Assn,** Columbus, GA, 4/29-5/1, Karla Langland, (910) 467-9358, info@ocsalumni.org; **Red Warriors Vietnam - HHC, 4/442nd & 4th Eng, 12th Inf Rgt,** Brookfield, WI, 5/16-18, Larry Rosencrans, (231) 329-9184, lrosencransphd@hotmail.com

COAST GUARD

***Campbell*,** Warwick, RI, 5/2-4, Bob Dell, (267) 663-7710, rvdell32@gmail.com

JOINT

Defense Race Relations Institute (DRRI) Grads (1972-1978), Fairfield, IA, 7/14-16, John Miller, (641) 209-1039, jcmiller69@msn.com; **Korea Veterans 2023 Annual Nat'l Spring Reunion,** Pigeon Forge, TN, 4/27-30, Chris Murphy, (828) 539-0714, koreaveterans@gmail.com

MARINES

1st Mar Div, Las Vegas, 8/13-20, June Cormier, (760) 763-3268, june.oldbreed@fmda.us; **Nat'l Montford Point Marine Assn,** Jacksonville, NC, 8/23-26, Ron Johnson, (504) 202-8552, vice_president@montfordpointmarines.com; ***Saipan* LHA 2,** Atlantic Beach, FL, 9/15-17, Jonathan Taylor, (918) 315-0828, johnnyeagle777@yahoo.com; **USMC Vietnam Tankers Assn,** Colorado Springs, CO, 9/13-19, John Wear, (719) 495-5998, johnwear2@verizon.net

NAVY

Airborne Early Warning Sqdn One (VW-1), Reno/Sparks, NV, 6/5-9, Michael Webber, (714) 779-7327, mgwi@aol.com; ***Albany* CA 123/CG 10/SSN 753 & Mar Det,** Nashville, TN, 8/20-25, Lou Amico, (781) 820-9933, reunion@ussalbany.org; ***Bausell* DD 845,** Dayton, OH, 9/20-26, Randy Holton, (614) 332-4540, bausell2023@yahoo.com; ***Canberra* CAG 2/CA 70,** Charleston, SC, 10/11-15, Ken Minick, (740) 423-8976, usscanberra@gmail.com; ***Chevalier* DD/DDR 805,** Bozeman, MT, 8/8-11, Jim Marchwick, (406) 586-2505; ***Chicago* CA 136/CG 11/SSN 721 & Mar Det,** New Orleans, 5/8-12, Reed Radcliffe, (314) 276-7481, reed@triplerphotography.com; ***Daniel Webster* SSBN 626,** St. Marys, GA, 10/31-11/5, Ron Mosher, (239) 860-6927, 2023websterreunion@gmail.com; ***Dewey* DLG 14/DDG 45,** Memphis, TN, 10/10-16, Jack Casta, (610) 608-0946, jax12654@gmail.com; ***Downes* FF 1070,** Warwick, RI, 9/13-18, Gary Court, (320) 493-9775, 1070ussdown@gmail.com; ***Galveston* CLG 3 & Mar Det,** Reno/Sparks, NV, 10/2-7, Bob Bakos, (412) 926-2129, robjan714@comcast.net; **Holy Loch, Scotland,** Dunoon, Scotland, 5/10-14, Gerry Haight, (307) 349-3468, charliehaight@yahoo.com; **HS-2**, Pensacola Beach, FL, 5/10-14, Joseph O'Connell, (770) 823-6621, fatboy195960@gmail.com; ***Ingraham* DD 694,** Providence, RI, 5/17-20, Gregory Miller, (814) 695-3246, gmamflyer@gmail.com; ***John Young* DD 973,** New Orleans, 6/21-29, 2024, Michael Trotta, (727) 505-4222, reunion@dd973.org; ***Johnston* DD 821,** Savannah, GA, 5/8-12, George Sites, (614) 946-1203, george.sites@gmail.com; ***Leary* DD/DDR 879 (1945-1974),** Jacksonville, FL, 9/19-23, Al Redden, (308) 530-1284, alshr@allophone.com; ***Leonard F. Mason* DD 852,** Manhattan, KS, 9/12-15, Gary Kraner, (785) 477-1889, gjkansas@gmail.com; **Navy Nuclear Wpns Assn,** Tucson, AZ, 11/5-9, Tyrus George, (724) 516-7284, tyrusg3175@gmail.com; **Navy Seabee Veterans of America,** San Antonio, 8/15-19, Charles Coffin, (203) 843-5513, nsvasec@gmail.com; **NMCB 40,** Tampa, FL, 4/20-23, Bruce Cheeks, (563) 349-4129, seabee40@csteldridge.com; **NMCB 58,** Kalispell, MT, 5/9-14, John Hughes, (571) 332-4961, nmcb58association@gmail.com; ***Rasher* SS/SSR/AGSS 269,** Buffalo, NY, 9/13-17, Richard Moore, (804) 815-0730, drifterpilot2@gmail.com; ***Raton* SS/SSR/AGSS 270,** Manitowoc, WI, 9/20-24, Larry Kramer, (360) 697-2842, ldkramer43@hotmail.com; ***Robert A. Owens* DD 827,** Mobile, AL, 10/2-6, Larry McCoskey, (502) 458-3140, larrymc3140@gmail.com; ***Simon Lake* AS 33,** Gatlinburg, TN, 9/24-27, John Craig, (732) 752-7534, fmfd103@aol.com; ***Turner Joy* DD 951,** San Diego, 10/11-15, Tod Hale, (541) 840-0492, hiwaysailor951@yahoo.com; **VAW-12,** Dayton, OH, 4/10-13, Richard Bray, (585) 576-0595, leighbray@hotmail.com; ***William R. Rush* DD/DDR 714,** Branson, MO, 10/22-27, Dennis Knoerzer, (636) 281-4120, wmrrushdd714@gmail.com; ***Yosemite* AD 19,** Jacksonville, FL, 4/26-30, Bill Krug, (570) 878-2860, w.krugiii@gmail.com

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Post 29, WV: Ward W. Cox, Charles U. Gear, Robert E. Hinzman, James A. Hinkle, Everett G. Lantz, James W. McCloud, Ivan D. Phillips, Lynn E. Phillips, Craig M. Right, Leonard Whritenour, Sterling W. Yeager

IN SEARCH OF

8th Inf Div HQ, HQ Co, 2nd Bde (Baumholder, Germany, 1972-1973), Eugene Flores, (909) 973-9967, aps56march@yahoo.com

338rd Sqdn Weather Recon, 55th Wing, Whooper Crane Flt (Forbes AFB, Topeka, KS), Ed Gaddie, edgaddie@sbcglobal.net

867th FA Bn "Atomic Annie," A Btry (Artillery Kaserne, Neckarsulm, Germany, 1953-1956), James Degnan, (661) 294-0256, my4cam@aol.com

A Btry 7th Bn 9th Arty 54th FA Grp (Dec 1968), Marvin Dickerson, dickersonmarvin704@gmail.com

Army Security Agency and Intelligence & Security Cmd Vets in South & Central Texas, Mike Lopez, (830) 537-5618, pez@gvtc.com

LEGION SHOPPER

B Co 322nd Sig Bn (Germany, 1951-1953), W. Hothan, 7 Apollo Circle, NY 11714
D Btry 6th Msl Bn 52nd Arty (Peden Barracks, Wertheim, Germany, 1963-1966), Raymond "Rick" Lowrey, (937) 845-0313, rms6679@aol.com
NAS Cubi Point, Philippines (1971-1974), Don Bankson (530) 262-4443
NAS Lakehurst, NJ, PR "A" School, Class 545 (Oct 1965-Feb 1966), E.A. Blumberg, (484) 793-5480

TAPS

David G. Alexander, Dept. of Tennessee. Dept. Cmdr. 2011-2012, Nat'l Americanism Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 2019-2021, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2005-2006, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 2019-2021, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2010-2011, and Nat'l Legis. Cmsn. Memb 2006-2010 and 2012-2015.
William R. Bryant, Dept. of Virginia. Nat'l Vice Cmdr. 2014-2015, Dept. Cmdr. 1987-1988, Nat'l Aerospace Cmte. Memb. 2011-2012, Nat'l Aerospace Cmte. Vice Chmn. 2012-2014, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 1993-1997, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 1997-2001, Nat'l Finance Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 2000-2001, Nat'l Guard & Reserve Forces Cmte. Vice Chmn. 2015-2017, Nat'l Public Relations Cmsn. Memb. 1985-1997 and 2001-2003, Nat'l Public Relations Cmsn. Vice Chmn. 2003-2005, Nat'l Public Relations Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1997-2000 and Nat'l Subcmte. on Cmtes. Memb. 2000-2001.
Richard R. Cartwright, Dept. of Rhode Island. Dept. Cmdr. 2015-2016, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2012-2013 and Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Memb. 2013-2017.
Paul A. Erickson, Dept of Colorado. Nat'l Americanism Cmsn. Memb. 1992-1993, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Memb. 2013-2017, Nat'l Children & Youth Cmsn. Memb. 2005-2013, Nat'l Children & Youth Cmsn. Region 7 Memb. 2004-2005, Nat'l Convention Resolutions Assignment Cmte. Memb. 2017-2023 and Nat'l Security Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1998-2004.
Edward J. Grimsley, Dept. of California. Dept. Cmdr. 2019-2021 and Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 2016-2018.
E. Dean Hunter, Dept. of Colorado. Dept. Cmdr. 1963-1964, Nat'l Americanism Cmsn. Vice Chmn. 1961-1962, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cmsn. Memb. 1963-1978, Nat'l Mbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1956-1957, Nat'l Public Relations Cmsn. Advisory Board Memb. 1978-1983, Nat'l Sec. Training Cmte. Memb. 1957-1958, Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehab. Cmte. Exec. Section Memb. 1984-1989 and Nat'l Veterans Preference Cmte. Memb. 1959-1960.
Richard T. Lee Jr., Dept. of California. Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1992-1993 and 1994-1996, Nat'l Counter-Subversive Activ. Cmte. Memb 1996-1997, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 1994-1996, Nat'l Veterans Pref. Cmte. Chmn. 2001-2009, Nat'l Veterans Pref. Cmte. Memb. 1997-1999 and Nat'l Veterans Pref. Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1999-2001.
James J. Leyser, Dept. of California. Nat'l American Legion Magazine Cmsn. Memb. 2006-2013, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Memb. 2016-2021 and Nat'l Media & Communications Cncl. Memb. 2013-2015.
William T. Mahan, Dept. of New York. Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Memb. 2017-2023.
Charles R. Morrissey Sr., Dept. of Connecticut. Dept. Cmdr. 2009-2010.
William J. Reed, Dept. of California. Nat'l Convention Resolutions Assignment Cmte. Memb. 2007-2013.
De Foreest B. Wright Jr., Dept. of California. Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1994-1998 and 2005-2007, and Nat'l Public Relations Cmsn. Memb. 2007-2012.

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About the time you think you can make ends meet, somebody moves the ends.

LEPRECHAUNS ARE SO OLD they remember when rainbows were black and white.

ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY, a man walked into a bar and started ordering martini after martini. He removed the olives and put them in a jar. When the jar was filled with olives and he'd finished all the drinks, he started to leave. As he did so, a curious customer asked him, "Excuse me, but what was that all about?"

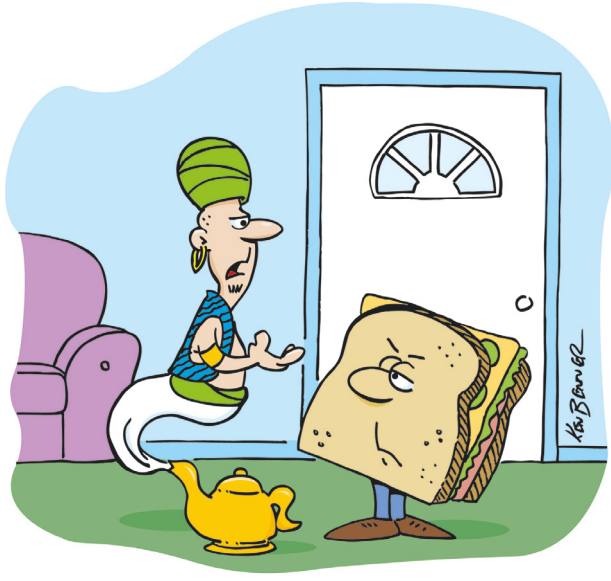
"My wife sent me out for a jar of olives."

THIS MORNING some clown opened the door for me. I thought to myself, "That's a nice jester."

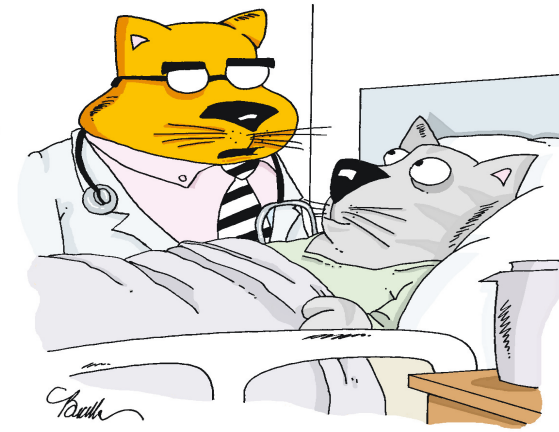
A TEENAGER got his driver's license. The family marched out to the driveway and climbed in the car so he could take them all for a ride. The father immediately headed for the back seat, directly behind the new driver.

"I'll bet you're back there to get a change of scenery after all those months of sitting in the front teaching me how to drive," the boy said.

"Nope," came the reply. "I'm gonna sit here and kick the back of your seat as you drive, like you've been doing to me all these years."



"Next time, be more specific when you say, 'Make me a sandwich.'"



"Medicine has made great advances over the years. Now curiosity is something we can treat."

"I guess you could call it a transfer. To save office space, we're putting you in the cloud."

A MAN walked into a magic forest and tried to cut down a talking tree.

"You can't cut me down," the tree complained. "I'm a talking tree!"

The man responded, "You may be a talking tree, but you will dialogue."

WHAT DO FACEBOOK and a fridge have in common? You know there's nothing there, but you still check every 10 minutes.

"I SAW AN ITEM on the menu that said 'Chef's recommendation.' What is all the other stuff, then? Is the chef just like, 'I could make it … I would NOT recommend it.'" – *Richard Sarvate*

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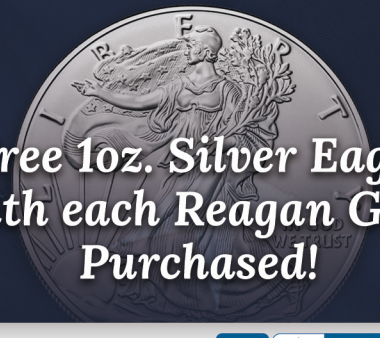

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